

Montgomery County Agricultural Advisory Committee-July 21, 2020-Agenda
Office of Agriculture- Jeremy Criss

1. Call the Meeting to Order-Introductions:
2. Approval of the May 19, 2020 AAC meeting minutes.
3. The Office of Agriculture continues to update our COVID-19 Agricultural Business Resources page published on the OAG website.
<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/agservices/boards-committees/guidance-for-ag-business.html>

The following farmers have received financial assistance.

Michael Protas-\$6,000 MCEDC Local Production Fund

Montgomery County was awarded a total of \$140,709 and ranked 4th in the State for the MARBIDCO COVID-19 Assistance Grant assisting 8 farmers.

Waredaca

Amaranth Acres

Lewis Orchard

Rock Hill orchard

Savage Acres Farm

Golden Acres Lawn care (Savage Acres son separate entity – forestry)

Butlers Orchard-\$20,000

One Acre Farm-\$32,250

A total of 39 Agricultural business owners applied to the Public Health Emergency Grant Program-PHEG

14 Agricultural businesses received grant funding totaling \$113,526 PHEG

Butlers Orchard-\$ 10,000- PHEG Grant

4. The Telework Assistance Program has received an additional appropriation \$1,250,000 from the County Council and MCEDC is administering the program. You can find all the necessary information here: <https://thinkmoco.com/telework-assistance-fund>

Linda Lewis received a \$2,500 grant and Tim McGrath received a \$1,323 Grant from MCEDC Telework Assistance Program

Please note that Nancy Warfield-MCFB has inquired about this program.

5. The Pick Your Own Operations are open for the 2020 season-Butlers Orchard, Homestead Farm, Rock Hill Orchard, Farm at Home. All employees and customers are required to wear cloth face coverings including all customers age nine and above.
https://mda.maryland.gov/maryland_products/Documents/Maryland-Pick-Your-Own-Operations-During-COVID-19-State-of-Emergency-FAQs.pdf
The Waredaca Equestrian Competition June 13-14, 2020 was approved by the County Health Officer Dr. Travis Gayles. This event involved between 80-100 people being spread out over the 198-acre farm. The County Health Officer is using this event including the social distancing instructions that Gretchen Butts provided as an example for other outdoor events under consideration.
6. Update on MC 6-20 Deer Hunting-Rifles used with Deer Management Permits. Delegate Eric Luedtke's office scheduled a summer committee meeting on June 10, 2020 to discuss this legislation that was assigned to summer study. The DNR Representatives announced they are proposing a new straight walled-25 caliber cartridge will be allowed for the all counties that allow rifles and this may include Montgomery County. This cartridge has a range of 250 yards, and it is more accurate than a shot gun. The second meeting of the Summer Committee is July 20, 2020.
7. The Office of Agriculture is continuing to work with the Montgomery County Food Council and Food Security Task Force to develop plans for expanding local food production. Approximately 8 farmers are willing to participate in this new Pilot Program with Food Assistance Providers like Manna Food Center and the Capital Area Food Bank to produce and distribute food to people in need. The Manna Food Center will be developing MOU's with the farmers on July 22, 2020 for the 2020 growing season.
8. The Council is scheduling a joint PHED/ T&E Committee Work Session on July 9 and 16, 2020 to discuss the Solar ZTA 20-01. A third Committee Work Session is scheduled for July 22, 2020. All agricultural groups reaffirmed their opposition to the Solar ZTA as introduced. Amendments to the ZTA are pending- prohibit solar on prime and productive soils, prohibit the removal of topsoil.
9. The County executed the Agriculture and Horticulture Contract with Chuck Schuster. The UM-Extension announced they will move forward to replace Chuck's UME full time faculty tenured position and there are three candidates (two internal to UME and one external) that will be scheduled for presentations the first week of August.
10. The Agricultural Advisory Committee needs new farmer and non-farmer representatives. Michele Cropp, Ben Allnutt-3rd term-Ben has asked his son Russ to apply, Linda Lewis-3rd term- Doug Lechluder-2nd term-Doug is eligible for waiver for 3rd term, Aliza Fishbein is interested in another 1 year term, Debra Tropp is interested another 1 year term, Leonard Yourman.

11. The Rustic Roads Advisory Committee needs a new farmer representative to replace Todd Greenstone-2nd term-This is a very important farmer representative that we need to identify.
12. Preliminary Draft Report Thrive 2050- <https://montgomeryplanningboard.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Final-staff-report-vision-goals-policies-and-actions-for-6-11-20-PB-.pdf> The agricultural groups need to review this report and provide comments back to MNCPPC in July. *Please see the attached message from MNCPPC staff back to the OAG.*
13. The APAB, AAC and MAP have provided recommendations to the County DOT to replace the single lane bridge along Schaeffer Road with a two-lane bridge that will qualify for State and Federal matching funds. The RRAC provided recommendations to retain the single lane bridge and only repair it.
14. The County has announced a 6% savings plan for FY21. This equates to \$ 60,000 for the Office of Agriculture. The proposed savings will come from a reduction in the MAEF Food Fiber and You- Mobile Science Lab and General Fund savings from the retirement of Melissa Steed who worked with me for the past 30 years. The PHED Committee approved the CE recommended savings of \$34,200 MAEF and there was no discussion on the savings from Melissa's position.
15. The OAG is working with the County Executive to amend Chapter 50 Subdivisions that will exempt commercial buildings used for agritourism, farm alcohol production and on-site farm markets. We are also recommending amendments to Chapter 52 Taxation to exempt these uses from the Development Impact taxes like Biotechnology businesses.

Upcoming Meetings and Events:

Agricultural Advisory Committee-July 21, 2020

PHED/T&E Committee Work Session-Solar ZTA 20-01-July 22, 2020

Montgomery County Farm Bureau Board of Directors- August 4, 2020

MCPS STEM Teachers Virtual Training-August 6, 2020

Agricultural Preservation Advisory Board-August 11, 2020

Montgomery Soil Conservation District Board of Supervisors-August 14, 2020

16. The Office of Agriculture continues to update our COVID-19 Agricultural Business Resources page published on the OAG website.

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19 of the applicants did not meet the 50% reduction in revenues requirement.

3 applicants were non-responsive and/or did not provide the required/requested documentation.

3 applicants are not in Good Standing with the State of Maryland.

17. The Telework Assistance Program has received an additional appropriation \$1,250,000 from the County Council and MCEDC is administering the program. You can find all the necessary information here: <https://thinkmoco.com/telework-assistance-fund>

Linda Lewis received a \$2,500 grant from MCEDC Telework Assistance Program *Please note the Tim McGrath submitted the paperwork and Nancy Warfield-MCFB has inquired about this program.*

18. The Pick Your Own Operations are starting for the 2020 season-Butlers Orchard, Homestead Farm, Rock Hill Orchard. All employees and customers are required to wear cloth face coverings including all customers age nine and above. https://mda.maryland.gov/maryland_products/Documents/Maryland-Pick-Your-Own-Operations-During-COVID-19-State-of-Emergency-FAQs.pdf

The Waredaca Equestrian Competition for June 13-14, 2020 was approved by the County Health Officer Dr. Travis Gayles. This event involves between 80-100 people being spread out over the 198-acre farm. Please see the attached messages and pictures from this event.

19. Update on MC 6-20 Deer Hunting-Rifles used with Deer Management Permits. Jeremy Criss was contacted by Delegate Luedtke's office scheduled a committee meeting on June 10, 2020 to discuss this legislation that was assigned to summer study. The DNR Representatives announced they are proposing a new straight walled-25 caliber cartridge will be allowed for the all counties that allow rifles

- and this may include Montgomery County. This cartridge has a range of 250 yards, and it is more accurate than a shot gun.
20. The Office of Agriculture is continuing to work with the Montgomery County Food Council and Food Security Task Force to develop plans for expanding local food production. Approximately 8 farmers are willing to participate in this new Pilot Program with Food Assistance Providers like Manna Food Center and the Capital Area Food Bank to distribute food to people in need. The Council has received a funding request for \$41.5 million from the Department of Health to help people in the County that need food.
 21. Hans Riemer is scheduling a joint PHED/ T&E County Council Committee Work Session on July 9 and 16, 2020 to discuss the Solar ZTA 20-01. All agricultural groups reaffirmed their opposition to the Solar ZTA as introduced. Amendments to the ZTA are pending.
 22. Everyone should have received the message about the Pigs that are up for adoption. If you are interested, please contact Animal Services.
 23. The County is executing the Agriculture and Horticulture Contract with Chuck Schuster. The UM-Extension has announced they will continue to move forward to replace Chuck's UME full time faculty tenured position.
 24. The Agricultural Advisory Committee needs new farmer and non-farmer representatives. Please see the attached announcement where the deadline to apply is July 6, 2020: Michele Cropp, Ben Allnut-3rd term-Ben has asked his son Russ to apply, Linda Lewis-3rd term-Linda can you assist me to find a new farmer member to serve on the AAC? Doug Lechluder-2nd term-Doug is eligible for waiver for 3rd term, Aliza Fishbein is interested in another 1 year term, Debra Tropp is interested another 1 year term, Leonard Yourman.
 25. The Rustic Roads Advisory Committee needs a new farmer representative to replace Todd Greenstone-2nd term-This is a very important farmer representative that we need to identify.
 26. Preliminary Draft Report Thrive 2050- <https://montgomeryplanningboard.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Final-staff-report-vision-goals-policies-and-actions-for-6-11-20-PB-.pdf> The agricultural groups need to review this report and provide comments back to MNCPPC in July. Please see the attached message that Jeremy forwarded to MNCPPC to address the Profitability and Viability of the Agricultural Sector.
 27. Update on the Schaeffer Road Bridge. Please see the attached messages from the Agricultural Advisory Committee and the Rustic Roads Advisory Committee.
 28. The County has announced a 6% savings plan for FY21. This equates to \$ 60,000 for the Office of Agriculture. The proposed savings will come from a reduction

in the MAEF Food Fiber and You- Mobile Science Lab and General Fund savings from the retirement of Melissa Steed.

29. Next meeting of the Agricultural Advisory Committee- July 21, 2020 at 7:00 pm.

Upcoming Meetings and Events:

Agricultural Advisory Committee-June 16, 2020-Cancelled

Montgomery County Farm Bureau Board of Directors- July 7, 2020

Montgomery Soil Conservation District Board of Supervisors-July 10, 2020

Agricultural Preservation Advisory Board-July 14, 2020

Agricultural Advisory Committee-July 21, 2020

PHED/T&E Committee Work Session-Solar ZTA 20-01-July 9 & 16, 2020